

May 2011 Overview
Klamath Backcountry Trail Crew
Dani Nelson: Supervisor

There is quite a bit to be said for surviving the first month of a CCC Backcountry season. The shock to the body alone can drive a person to consider any and all alternatives available to them for what they "could" be doing instead of living in the rain and spending endless days toiling in the dirt. But the Klamath crew has held strong with a month full of laughter, muscle building and familiarizing themselves with the lay of the land. We have faired well and happily, and are glad to be together in the mountains soaking up all the many lessons that living away from the buzz of society has to offer.

Our home for the month of May was definitely something to be envied by those of you who are sitting at a computer to read this. We lived at Bird Ranch at the South Fork of the Salmon River. The view from camp was a huge open meadow at the foot of snow-topped mountains. We had an old school barn, cabin and a corral filled with mules and horses. The vehicles were the only things there to remind us that we were living in the 21st century. Tents held up to the rain, as did our spirits, and the stars never looked so beautiful as they filled the sky on clear nights.

The work was intimidating at first. We spent our days swinging picks, shoveling dirt and pulling cross cuts. We built new trail, re-treaded old trail and opened up corridor to fight back nature's attempt at covering the years of work that have come before. As a special treat for the crew, everyone had a day of riding the horses and taking the mules out on maintenance runs with chainsaws and crosscuts. Here at the end of May, everyone is feeling stronger, the work is going faster and every day people stand taller basking in what we've all accomplished.

Production:

16 Miles of Trail Maintenance-Including 4.5 miles of tread maintenance. This is essentially like building new tread. The crew have become amazing at this!

.5 miles of brand new trail construction.

A bazillion log outs. Mostly with crosscuts.

1 check and 1 sq yd of single tier wall.

Special Thanks:

Ellen Andrews-Seriously, our foreman is one of the hardest working ladies I've ever seen. She had endless patience with the crew while teaching and mentoring them through their first month and set a work pace that we are all aspiring to. The only happy thing about leaving her next month is that we get to return to her guidance in August.

Steven Addison-Without Steven's volunteering to deliver us food, set up classes for us and run errands, we would have been lost. We are incredibly lucky to have such a

dedicated person willing to work with us, and are lucky to have him as a sponsor for most of the summer.

Lee Bundy- Not only did he teach us classes but he took some personal time to volunteer with us out on the grade. We love his laugh and love his great example of dedication to the land even more.

Marla DeKlotz-Our cook is AMAZING! For anyone who may have been worried about us eating well, worry no more. Marla kept us full and made us incredibly delicious food. She also gave us love, caring and the kind of Backcountry spirit that reminds the crew everyday why this is wonderful. We will miss her until August.

Curriculum:

This month we had some great classes for the crew. I've highlighted a few below.

Man Camp-Lee Bundy-The crew learned to crosscut and how to forge picks. They also learned how to be “more manly” just like Lee Bundy.

Maps and Compasses-How to with a great view!-Steve Renner-Forest Service Engineer

Klamath N.F. Fisheries-Sue Mauer-With love and enthusiasm we learned about the fish life cycle and the various fish species on the Klamath.

Trail Logistics and Measurements-Carl Menconi-The crew learned a variety of ways to measure grade and tree heights with things they carry everyday. They also learned more use for their compasses. As a special bonus, Carl worked with us for the week and taught us a bit about having fun on the grade. (I know he was having fun!)

We had a variety of other classes that have molded and perpetuated us through this first month.